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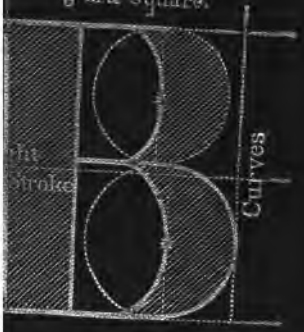
$\frac{5}{6}$ of a Square.



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Tompson's Roman Alphabet.

This work is prepared for Engravers' and Sign-Painters' Pupils, and for Schools or Amateurs. The letters following the text, are exact lithographic transfers from the copper-plate engraving, made by the Author.

The Alphabet here offered gives a few easily made Scales, by means of which any one may draw, in true proportion, and in upright or sloping form, all the Roman Letters. Instruction is given as to the Drawing of Letters by the Scales,—the Height of Letters,—their Width,—Body Strokes,—Hair Strokes,—Feet,—and the Space between Letters. Very important directions are made, on the variations in width, height and parts of letters, *when in connection with other letters;*

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as the want of such knowledge explains the awkward effect so frequently observed in sign and engraved work.

The Roman is the most valuable, and most common of all the forms of letters in our use, and also the basis for many ornamental characters; therefore the need of an exact knowledge for its construction. There are many books of *examples* of letters, but as they are without the explanations here given, the student is obliged to copy mechanically, and does not learn the principles necessary to make him a master of this art. As the Editor of one of the Trade journals, very clearly wrote, in a criticism of this work when it was first published:—

"The value of skill in design, and of rules for composition and harmony in distribution of lines, even in sign-writing, cannot be overstated. Every reader of the printed page who has an eye for symmetry and gradation in form cannot but take offense at the want of harmony in ordinary print. This is, however, unavoidable. Perfect legibility and accuracy are of

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course the first consideration; this being attained, mere beauty of lines is less important and indeed impossible. The metal or wooden types and blocks are rigid and unyielding. They must be of uniform size, and inasmuch as their combinations are infinite, there are no means of accommodating their lines so as to produce that illusion which alone can give harmony of effect. For instance, the letters being either curved or angular, they must be often compressed; at other times widely separated in their main lines from each other; the result of which is, that the lines, perpendicular or horizontal, appear now crowded, now sparse, and display too much or too little background, or, as the printers say, too much white paper. At this point art steps in, and the skilful sign-writer can preserve harmony by the use of illusion; all pictorial art is dependent on illusion. The writer who stamps mathematical lines is a mechanic; the artist makes judicious use of perspective by shading; even the application of different spacing, increasing or lessening the actual distances, will help the eye to a harmonious composition. The sign-writers' ability to describe curved or straight lines and to master a variety of styles, is only half his business. When the mechanical handicraft is perfected by practice, then we come to the higher art of distribution and arrangement"

At the end of the Alphabet will be found specimens of Ornamental, Distorted and Perspective letters.

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Construction of Scales.

Scale 1—Is a Square; divided by vertical lines, into halves, sixths, and twelfths; and by horizontal lines, into halves and thirds.

Scale 2—Is the Half of a Square; divided as in Scale 1, and made for narrow letters.

Scale 3—Is the quarter of a Square; divided as in Scale 1, and made for sloping letters.

Scale 4—Is a Double-Square; divided as in Scale 1, and made for flattened letters.

On the examples, A, B, C and K, are noted the terms applied to the different parts of letters; and, on A, B, E, K, N, T, U, V, W, X, and Y, are marked the width or height of certain portions.

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RULE 1.

Drawing Letters by the Scales.

The examples so thoroughly explain themselves, with their guiding lines and marks, that it is not necessary to give much instruction.

Always begin by making a *top*, a *bottom*, and then a *centre* horizontal line; this latter line will be found a very useful guide.

A is to be drawn as in the example. In forming this letter, use the preceding portion of Square constructed from Scale 1, and in which the dotted lines are supposed to be made with a pencil.—The curves of B are struck from two circles, and the inside lines are drawn by hand.—C is made from two circles, as shown in the drawing.—The front of D is constructed like the back of C.—K must have the upright body

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divided into four parts, as defined in the example. A line is then drawn from the top foot, on the right hand corner, to the beginning of the bottom-fourth, on the inside of the upright body stroke. Another line, (part of which is to be imagined) is then made from the end of the top-fourth of the upright body, and continued as the inside line of the sloping stroke. An outside line is then drawn parallel to the last line, to the foot of the sloping stroke. —The letter S is struck from two circles, the upper one being smaller than the under one, and having their centres very near each other; as also marked in C, D, G, and O.—F is an E without the bottom foot.—L is the body stroke, and bottom foot of E.—I is the half of H.—V is an A inverted, omitting the cross-line.—W is formed by making a narrow V, (four-sixths wide, by Scale 1,) and joining with it another V, of the same width, as shown in the example.

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RULE 2.

Height of Letters.

All letters must be of the same height, except those with curved or pointed parts at top or bottom.—C, G, J, O, Q, S, U, and the character & have curved parts; the letters A, V, and W, have pointed parts. Wherever curved or pointed parts are at the *top* of these letters, they must be drawn a trifle *above* the dotted line; and when at the *bottom*, they must be carried *below* the line, except in the case of &. Unless so drawn, they will look smaller than letters which are square in form. An examination of these letters will show the necessity for careful observance of this rule. In &, the bottom curved parts are, properly, *on* instead of *below* the line; if the top had also been *on* the line, instead of above it, the value of this difference would be apparent.

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RULE 3.

Width of Letters.

The width of letters is a matter of taste or governed by their relative position; no fixed rule can be made.—In making an Alphabet, the width must be a little less than the height, as in the letter A (constructed by the Scale), where the width is five-sixths of the height. The same width holds for B, C, D, G, H, K, M, O, P, Q, R, S, T, V, X, Y, Z.—The width of E, F, and L, is nine-twelfths;—J, N, and U, four-sixths;—I, three-twelfths;—and for &, the width is equal to the height.—The width of W is four-sixths, and two-sixths added, as shown on the example.

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RULE 4.

Body Strokes of Letters.

Upright and sloping body strokes must be of one thickness. Those for a standard letter are about three-twelfths in width, by Scale 1; but some uses require four-twelfths, or five-twelfths.—Circular and curved body strokes, in C, D, G, O, Q, S, and &, must be a little wider, and the addition is to be given on the outside of the letters, as shown in the examples; otherwise they will look narrower than the upright body strokes.—The upper curves of B and R are of the same width as the upright strokes, and do not project to the limit of the square; and the bottom curves are nearly equal to the large curved body strokes in other letters. The curve of P should extend to the whole limit for the letter, drop below the centre line, and be a trifle thicker than the body stroke.

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RULE 5.

Hair Strokes of Letters.

The "Spurs," or horizontal projections of top and bottom hair strokes, should not extend more than one-sixth beyond the body strokes. The curved hair stroke of C must be drawn up one-third from the bottom, and to the limit of the Square. The sloping hair stroke of K is drawn down, from a point a trifle within the limit of the Square to one-fourth from the bottom of the inside of the upright; that of M goes to the bottom, half-way between the upright hair and body strokes; that of X crosses a trifle to the left of the centre; that of Y joins on the centre. The central hair stroke of P joins the body stroke as much below the centre, as those of B, E, F, H, and R, join above the centre. The central hair stroke of A crosses at one-third from the bottom. (See Rule 7.)

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RULE 6.

Feet of Letters.

Top feet, of whatever shape, except those of T, as shown in the example, are smaller than bottom feet. The top feet of C, E, F, G, S, and Z, must not extend to the limit of the Square, and should be less than a third of the height of the letters. The bottom feet of E, G, J, L, S, and Z, must be drawn up one-third, and extend to the limit of the Square. The central foot of E must fill the space left by the top and bottom feet, and project half way between the body stroke and the front of the letter; and the F must be treated in the same manner. A, M, N, W, X, and Y, would not look well with feet larger than one-fifth of their height. (See Rule 7.)

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RULE 7.

Space Between Letters.

However well proportioned, when letters stand together, an even effect is not produced unless a proper space is made between them. —B, and H, for instance, have a uniform space; but where there are combinations of such shapes as AA, AJ, WY, PY,—the two first groups very open at the top, and the last two at the bottom—the effect is awkward. This appearance may be avoided, by making the "spurs," or horizontal projections of the hair strokes, in AA, only half the usual width, and thus have the letters nearly touch. The same treatment follows with the other groups.—OO should be very close; but when PA, AY, AT, LT, come together and appear uneven, they may be made to overlap each other. —When L comes before A or J, its width

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should be narrowed to four-sixths; and the same alteration should be made for F, when before T, W, or Y. When such contractions in width are made for F, L, and T, their feet must extend one-twelfth further than the one-third allowed on the Scale.

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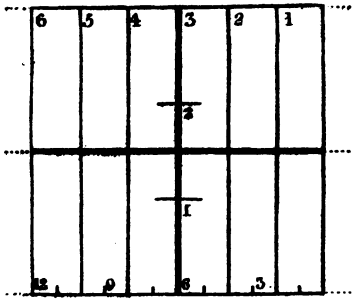

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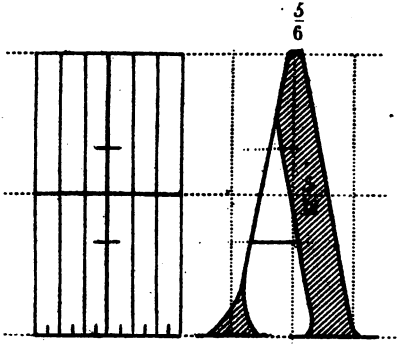

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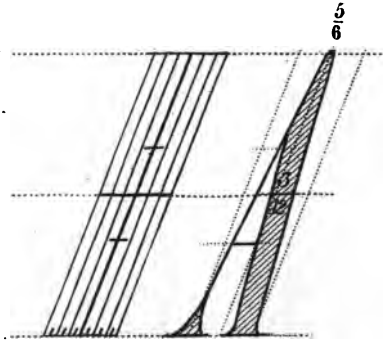

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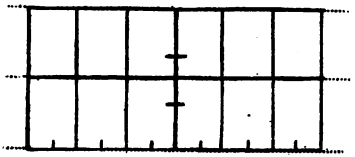

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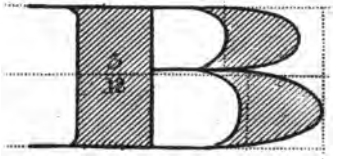

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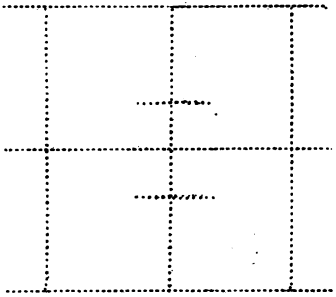

the construction of an A.
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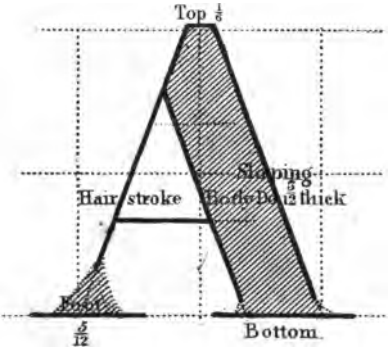

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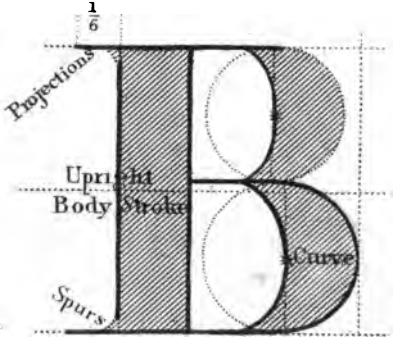

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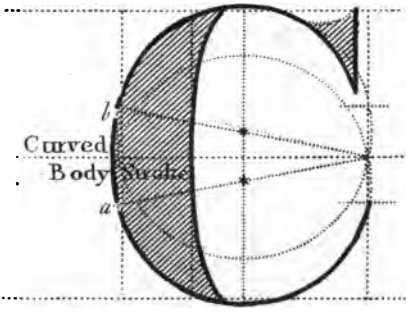

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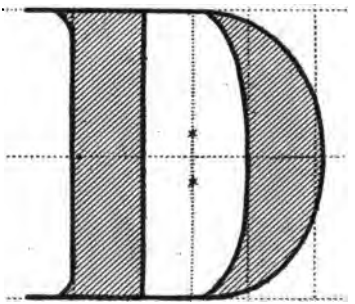

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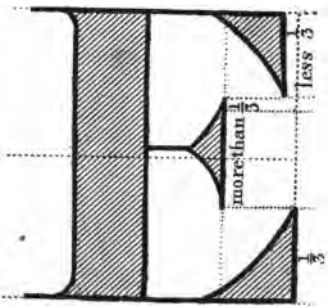

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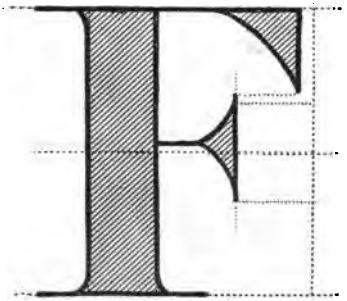

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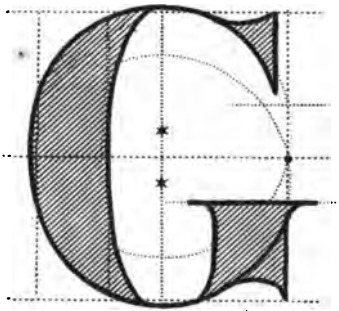

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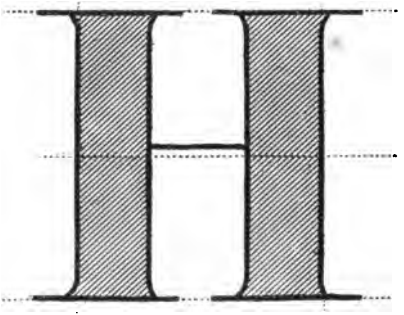

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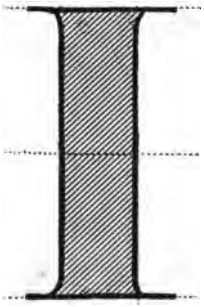

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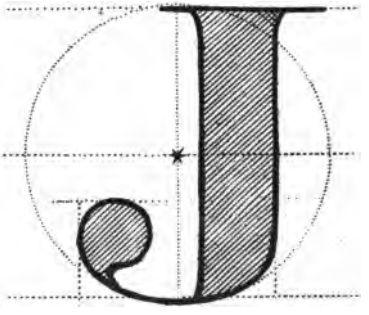

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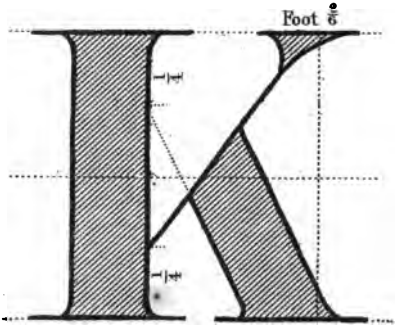

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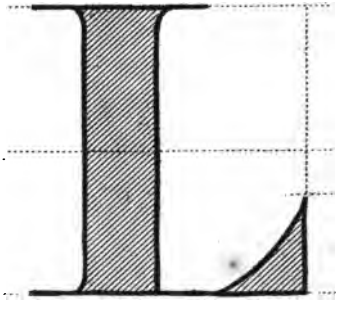

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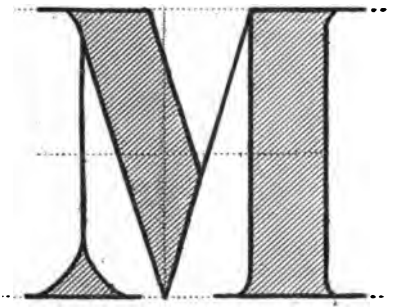

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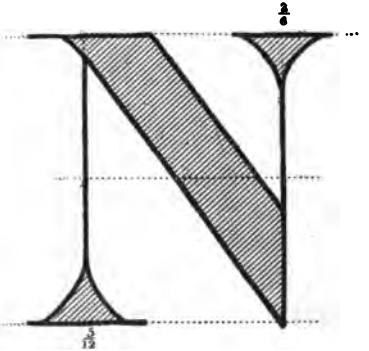

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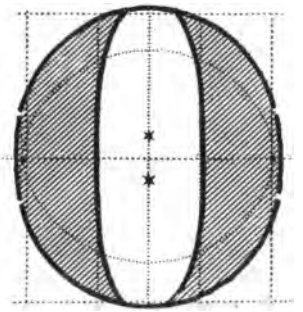

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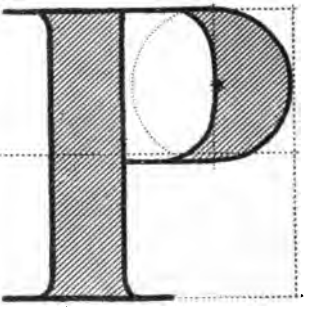

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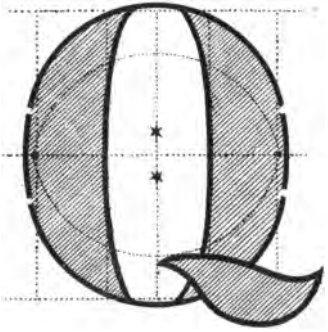

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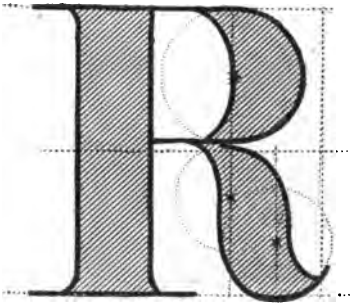

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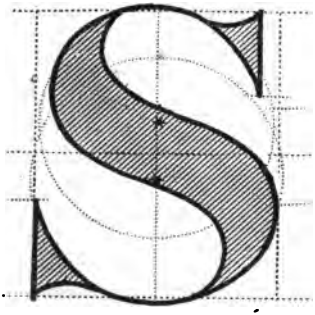

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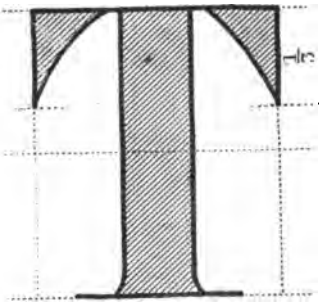

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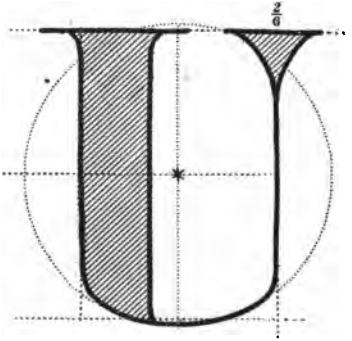

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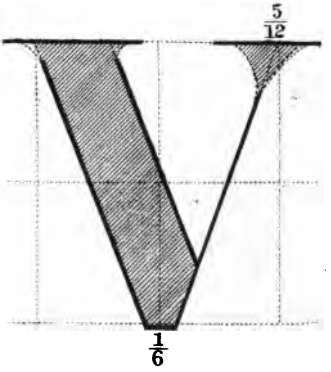

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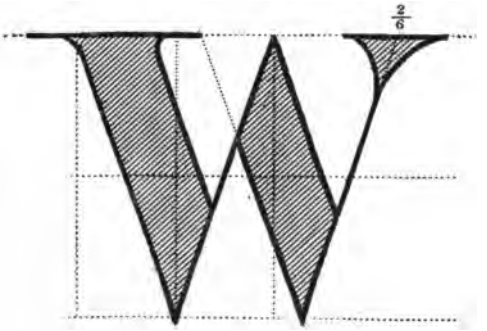

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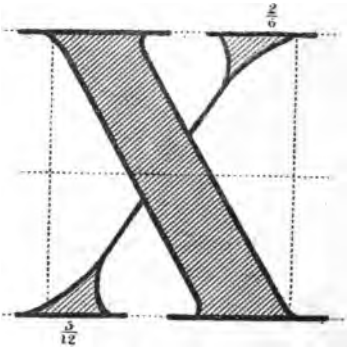

(FROM SCALE I).

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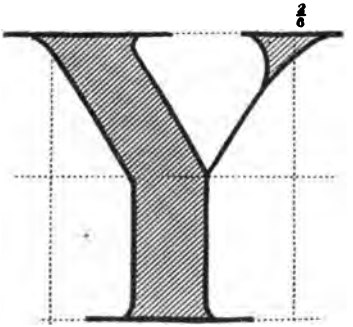

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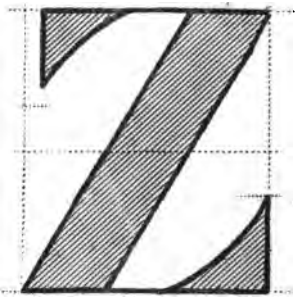

(FROM SCALE 1.)

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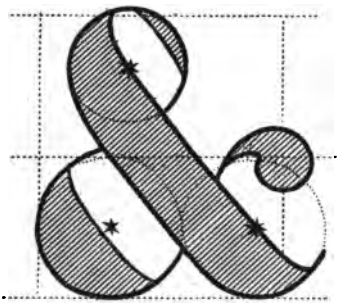

(FROM SCALE 1.)

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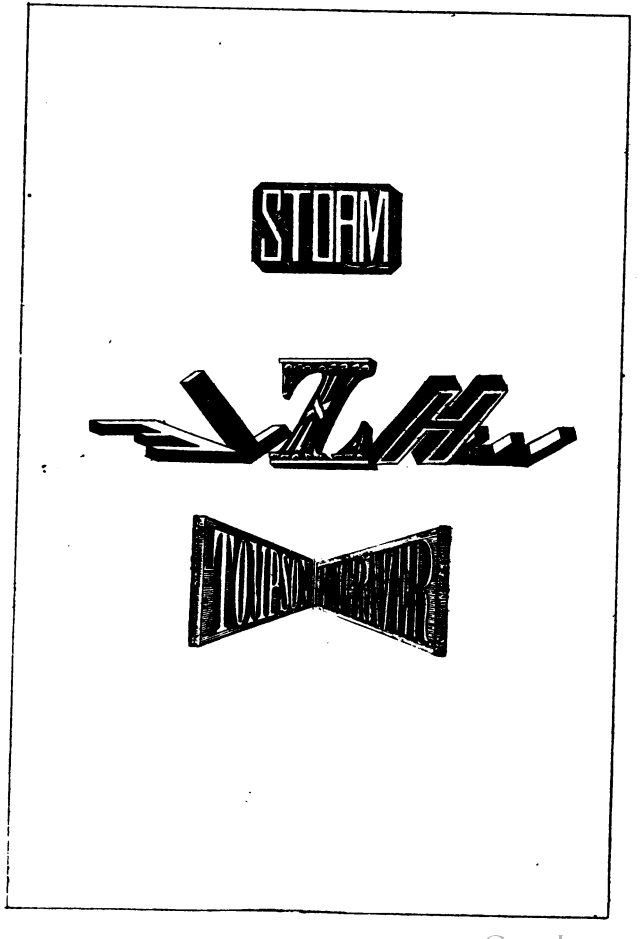

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